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Satoru UEDA)	Examiner: Strange, Aaron N
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Serial No. 09/819,244)	
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For: COMMUNICATION CONTENTS)	VERIFIED TRANSLATION OF
CERTIFICATION SYSTEM,)	PRIORITY DOCUMENT
COMMUNICATION CONTENTS)	
CERTIFICATION APPARATUS,)	
COMMUNICATION CONTENTS)	
CERTIFICATION METHOD, AND)	
RECORDING MEDIUM)	

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

I declare that I can read and speak both the English and Japanese languages, and that I have translated, fully and accurately, the following Japanese application for which priority is claimed:

JAPANESE APPLICATION NO. P2000-098075

A copy of my English translation of the above priority application is attached hereto.

I further declare that all statements made herein of my knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or document or any registration resulting therefrom.

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Yasuhito KAJIKAWA

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[Inventor]

 [Address] c/o Sony Corporation
 7-35, Kitashinagawa 6-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo

 [Name] Satoru UEDA

[Applicant for Patent]

 [Identification No.] 000002185

 [Name] Sony Corporation

 [Representative] Nobuyuki IDEI

 [Contact Information] Phone No. 03-5448-2137

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 [Object Name] Specification 1

 [Object Name] Drawings 1

 [Object Name] Abstract 1

[Necessity of Confirmation] Necessary

[Document Name] Specification

[Title of the Invention]

COMMUNICATION CONTENTS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM, COMMUNICATION CONTENTS CERTIFICATION APPARATUS, COMMUNICATION CONTENTS CERTIFICATION METHOD, AND RECORDING MEDIUM

[Scope of Claims]

[Claim 1] A communication contents certification system for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line, said communication contents certification system comprising:

a first party communication terminal for transmitting said electronic mail;

a communication contents certification apparatus having communication contents receiving means for receiving said electronic mail transmitted by said first party communication terminal, communication contents storage means for storing the contents of said electronic mail received by said communication contents receiving means, and communication contents transmission means for transmitting said electronic mail whose contents are stored by said communication contents storage means; and

a second party communication terminal for receiving said electronic mail transmitted by said communication contents transmission means.

[Claim 2] The communication contents certification system according to claim 1, wherein said second party communication terminal that receives said electronic mail further transmits reception confirmation information for indicating that said electronic mail is received;

wherein said communication contents receiving means further receives said reception confirmation information transmitted by said second party communication terminal; and

wherein said communication contents storage means further stores said reception confirmation information received by said communication contents receiving means.

[Claim 3] The communication contents certification system according to claim 2, wherein said reception confirmation information is encrypted and transmitted.

[Claim 4] The communication contents certification system according to claim 1, wherein said electronic mail is encrypted and transmitted.

[Claim 5] The communication contents certification system according to claim 1, wherein said communication contents certification apparatus further comprises party identification means for identifying a sender of said transmitted electronic mail.

[Claim 6] The communication contents certification system according to claim 1, wherein said communication contents

certification apparatus further comprises charging means for processing the charge for use of said communication contents certification apparatus.

[Claim 7] A communication contents certification apparatus for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line, said communication contents certification apparatus comprising:

communication contents receiving means for receiving said transmitted electronic mail;

communication contents storage means for storing the contents of said electronic mail received by said communication contents receiving means; and

communication contents transmission means for transmitting said electronic mail whose contents are stored by said communication contents storage means.

[Claim 8] A communication contents certification method for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line,

wherein said electronic mail is transmitted;

wherein said transmitted electronic mail is received;

wherein the contents of said received electronic mail is stored;

wherein said electronic mail whose contents are stored is transmitted; and

wherein said transmitted electronic mail is received.

[Claim 9] A computer-readable information recording medium having a program for allowing a computer to perform functions of receiving said transmitted electronic mail, storing the contents of said received electronic mail, and transmitting said electronic mail whose contents are stored.

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

The present invention relates to a communication contents certification system, a communication contents certification apparatus, and a communication contents certification method that are used for certifying the communication contents, and a computer-readable recording medium having a program for allowing a computer to perform such functions. More particularly, it relates to a communication certification system, a communication certification apparatus, and a communication contents certification method used for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line, and a computer readable-recording medium having a program for allowing a computer to perform such functions.

[0002]

[Prior Art]

Recently, with development of the telecommunication line such as the Internet, the information transmission by electronic mail such as E-mail or the like has been used popularly. The information transmission by electronic mail is used not only for communication of personal documents between communication parties but also for electronic commerce, and it is expected that the information transmission by use of such electronic mail will be used further widely in various fields.

[0003]

For example, with recent popularization of home digital video cameras and image editing apparatuses, anyone can take and edit the high quality picture easily. The contents prepared as described hereinabove attached to an electronic mail are transmitted to a contents creating company, and the contents creating company commercializes the contents transmitted as described hereinabove. It is expected that such type of commercialization of the contents will be popularized in the future.

[0004]

[Problem to be Solved by the Invention]

However, in the case of conventional electronic mail communication, because only the communication terminals of the parties who have communicated the electronic mail can store

the transmitted electronic mail, the objectivity of the communicated electronic mail contents cannot be secured. In the case where the electronic mail is used commercially, the objectivity of the transaction contents cannot be secured as sufficient certification. This is a problem of the conventional method. Such a problem is particularly remarkable in the case where the difference in power between both parties is significant.

[0005]

The present invention has been accomplished in view of such problems, and it is an object of the present invention to provide a communication contents certification system used for certifying the contents of a communicated electronic mail and for sufficiently securing the certification of transaction contents that have been carried out by use of the electronic mail.

[0006]

Further, it is another object of the present invention to provide a communication contents certification apparatus used for certifying the contents of a communicated electronic mail and for sufficiently securing the certification of transaction contents that have been carried out by use of the electronic mail.

[0007]

Further, it is another object of the present invention to provide a communication contents certification method used for certifying the contents of a communicated electronic mail, and for sufficiently securing the certification of transaction contents that have been carried out by use of the electronic mail.

[0008]

Further, it is still another object of the present invention to provide a computer-readable recording medium having a program for allowing a computer to perform functions of certifying the contents of a communicated electronic mail and sufficiently securing the certification of transaction contents that have been carried out by use of the electronic mail.

[0009]

[Means for Solving the Problem]

To solve the above-mentioned problem, the present invention provides a communication contents certification system for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line, the communication contents certification system comprising: a first party communication terminal for transmitting the electronic mail; a communication contents certification apparatus having communication contents receiving means for

receiving the electronic mail transmitted from the first party communication terminal, communication contents storage means for storing the contents of the electronic mail received by the communication contents receiving means, and communication contents transmission means for transmitting the electronic mail whose contents are stored in the communication contents storage means; and a second party communication terminal for receiving the electronic mail transmitted from the communication contents transmission means.

[0010]

In this regard, the first party communication terminal transmits an electronic mail, the communication contents receiving means receives the electronic mail transmitted from the first party communication terminal, the communication contents storage means stores the contents of the electronic mail received by the communication contents receiving means, the communication contents transmission means transmits the electronic mail whose contents are stored in the communication contents storage means, and the second party communication terminal receives the electronic mail transmitted from the communication contents transmission means.

[0011]

Further, the present invention provides a communication contents certification apparatus for certifying the contents

of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line, the communication contents certification apparatus having communication contents receiving means for receiving the transmitted electronic mail, communication contents storage means for storing the contents of the electronic mail received by the communication contents receiving means, and communication contents transmission means for transmitting the electronic mail whose contents are stored in the communication contents storage means.

[0012] Herein, the communication contents receiving means receives the electronic mail transmitted from the first party communication terminal, the communication contents storage means stores the contents of the electronic mail received by the communication contents receiving means, and the communication contents transmission means transmits the electronic mail whose contents are stored in the communication contents storage means to the second party communication terminal.

[0013]

Furthermore, the present invention provides a communication contents certification method for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through a telecommunication line, wherein the electronic mail is transmitted, the transmitted electronic mail is received, the

contents of the received electronic mail is stored, the electronic mail whose contents are stored is transmitted, and the transmitted electronic mail is received.

[0014]

By using the above-mentioned method, it becomes possible for the contents of a communicated electronic mail to be certified objectively.

Furthermore, the present invention provides a computer-readable information recording medium having a program for allowing a computer to perform functions of receiving the transmitted electronic mail, storing the contents of the received electronic mail, and transmitting the electronic mail whose contents are stored.

[0015]

[Preferred Embodiments]

Embodiments of the present invention will be described hereinafter with reference to the drawings.

Fig. 1 is a block diagram illustrating a communication contents certification system 10 in accordance with the present invention.

[0016]

The communication contents certification system 10 comprises party communication terminals 13a and 13c that are a first communication terminal for transmitting an electronic

mail or a second communication terminal for receiving an electronic mail, attorney communication terminals 13b and 13d, a telecommunication line 12 such as the Internet or the like for communicating an electronic mail or the like, and a communication contents certification apparatus 11 for certifying the contents of an electronic mail communicated through the telecommunication line.

[0017]

The party communication terminals 13a and 13c are communication terminals of personal computers or the like owned by communication party who communicates an electronic mail for commercial transaction. The attorney communication terminal 13b is a communication terminal owned by an attorney for the party who owns the party communication terminal 13a, and on the other hand the attorney communication terminal 13d is a communication terminal owned by an attorney for the party who owns the party communication terminal 13c who gives advice to the party from the stand point of a law expert.

[0018]

The communication contents certification apparatus 11 for certification, which is owned and managed by a third party other than the above-mentioned communication parties and attorneys, comprises communication contents receiving means 11a for receiving an electronic mail transmitted from the first

communication terminal, party identification means 11b for identifying a sender of a transmitted electronic mail, communication contents storage means 11c for storing the contents of an electronic mail received by the communication contents receiving means 11a, charging means 11d for processing the charge for use of the communication contents certification apparatus, and communication contents transmission means 11e for transmitting an electronic mail whose contents are stored in the communication contents storage means 11c.

[0019]

The party communication terminals 13a and 13c and attorney communication terminals 13b and 13d are electrically connected to the telecommunication line 12 so as to communicate with each other, and the communication contents certification apparatus 11 is electrically connected communicatively to the telecommunication line 12 by means of the communication contents receiving means 11a and the communication contents transmission means 11e.

[0020]

Next, the operation of the communication contents certification system 10 will be described with reference to Fig. 1. Described below is an example in which the owner of the party communication terminal 13a (hereafter referred to as first communication party) transmits an electronic mail

for commercial transaction to the owner of the party communication terminal 13c (hereafter referred to as second communication party).

[0021]

In using the communication contents certification system 10, first, the first communication party, the second communication party, and their attorneys make a contract for using the communication contents certification system 10, and are issued personal IDs and passwords that are necessary for personal authentication. The personal IDs and passwords issued as described hereinabove are held by the first communication party or the like who made the contract for using the communication contents certification system 10, and stored on the recording device of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 not shown in the drawing.

[0022]

Next, the first communication party who wants to transmit an electronic mail by use of the communication certification system 10 first enters a transmission message at the party communication terminal 13a. Fig. 2 shows a transmission message window 20 displayed on the screen of the party communication terminal 13a when the transmission message as shown herein is entered. The transmission message window 20 comprises a message display section 21 for displaying a

transmission message, a transmission button 22 that is clicked when the transmission message is transmitted to the party communication terminal 13c, and a transmission button 23 that is clicked when the transmission message is transmitted to the attorney communication terminal 13b. The transmission message is entered when the first communication party enters characters from a keyboard or the like of the party communication terminal 13a while viewing the message display section 21.

[0023]

When the input of the transmission message is completed, the first communication party then asks the attorney to confirm the contents of the prepared transmission message. For asking the attorney to confirm the contents of the transmission message, the first communication party transmits the prepared transmission message as an electronic mail by clicking the transmission button 23 of the transmission message window 20. The electronic mail of the transmission message transmitted from the party communication terminal 13a is first received by the communication contents receiving means 11a of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 through the telecommunication line 12. The electronic mail of the transmission message received by the communication contents receiving means 11a is transmitted to the party identification

means 11b, and the party identification means 11b checks whether the sender of the received electronic mail is exactly the contractor or not by use of the personal ID and password of the using contractor stored on the recording device not shown in the drawing.

[0024]

Herein, if the sender of the electronic mail is determined to be exactly the contractor, the information of the contractor checked by the party identification means 11b is transmitted to the charging means 11d, and the charging means 11d carries out the charge processing to the user based on the information. Furthermore, the contents of the electronic mail are stored in the communication contents storage means 11c as the communication history, and the electronic mail that has been transmitted by the communication contents transmission means 11e from the communication contents transmission means 11e is received by means of the attorney communication terminal 13b through the telecommunication line 12.

[0025]

The electronic mail received by means of the attorney communication terminal 13b is displayed on the attorney communication terminal 13b as a received message, and the attorney for the first communication party views the displayed received message and transmits a comment on the content as

an electronic mail. The transmitted electronic mail is received by the communication contents receiving means 11a of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 through the telecommunication line 12 as in the case described hereinabove, subjected to user authentication by the party identification means 11b, stored in the communication contents storage means 11c, and transmitted by the communication contents transmission means 11e. Subsequently, the electric mail is received by means of the party communication terminal 13a through the telecommunication line 12, and the comment transmitted by the electronic mail is displayed on the party communication terminal 13a.

[0026]

The first communication party who has viewed the comment transmitted from the attorney displayed on the party communication terminal 13a prepares a final transmission message with reference to the comment, and then clicks the transmission button 22 in the transmission message window 20 to transmit the electronic mail of the transmission message. The transmitted electronic mail is received by the communication contents receiving means 11a of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 through the telecommunication line 12 as in the above-mentioned case, subjected to user authentication by the party identification

means 11b, stored in the communication contents storage means 11c, and transmitted by the communication contents transmission means 11e. Subsequently, the electronic mail is received by the party communication means 13c through the telecommunication line 12, and the contents of the electronic mail are displayed on the party communication terminal 13c as a received message. Fig. 3 shows a received message window 30 displayed on the screen of the party communication terminal 13c.

[0027]

The received message window 30 is composed of a message display section 31 for displaying a received message, a transmission button 32 that is clicked when a prepared message is transmitted to the party communication terminal 13a, a transmission button 33 that is clicked when the prepared message is transmitted to the attorney communication terminal 13d, and a reception confirmation button 34 for confirming that an electronic mail is received.

[0028]

The second communication party who has viewed the received message displayed on the message display section 31 first clicks the reception confirmation button 34 which indicates that the electronic mail is received. When the reception confirmation button 34 is clicked, the party

communication terminal 13c transmits the reception confirmation information, and the transmitted reception confirmation signal is received by the communication contents receiving means 11a of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 through the telecommunication line 12 as in the case of the above-mentioned electronic mail, subjected to user authentication by the party identification means 11b, stored in the communication contents storage means 11c, and transmitted by the communication contents transmission means 11e. Subsequently, the electronic mail is received by the party communication terminal 13a through the telecommunication line 12. Thereby, the first communication party can be aware that the transmitted electronic mail has been received by the second communication party.

[0029]

Furthermore, when the second communication party sends a reply message to the received message by electronic mail, first, a reply message is prepared and the transmission button 33 is clicked so that the electronic mail of the prepared reply message is transmitted to the attorney communication terminal 13d by way of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 as in the above-mentioned case where the first communication party prepares the transmission message. The

attorney for the second communication party transmits an electronic mail of a comment on the electronic mail of the reply message to the party communication terminal 13c by way of the communication contents certification apparatus 11. Next, the second communication party prepares a final reply message with reference to the comment given by the attorney, and transmits an electronic mail of the prepared final reply message to the party communication terminal 13a by way of the communication contents certification apparatus 11. The communication history of the electronic mail concerning the reply message is also stored in the communication contents storage means 11c as in the above-mentioned case.

[0030]

As described hereinabove, because an electronic mail transmitted from the party communication terminal 13a is stored in the communication contents storage means 11c of the communication contents certification apparatus 11 and also transmitted to the party communication terminal 13c in the present embodiment, the contents of the electronic mail communicated between both communication parties can be stored by the third party organization who is not the communication parties. As a result, it is possible to certify the contents of the communicated electronic mail and to sufficiently secure the certification of the transaction contents carried out by

electronic mail.

[0031]

The above-mentioned processing function can be realized by a computer. In this case, the processing contents of the function that the communication contents certification apparatus 11 should have are described in a program recorded on a computer-readable recording medium. The program is executed on a computer to thereby realize the above-mentioned processing on the computer. A magnetic recording device, semiconductor memory, etc. may be used as the computer-readable recording medium. For distribution in the market, a portable recording medium such as CD-ROM (Compact Disk Read-Only Memory) or floppy disk on which the program is stored may be distributed, or the program that is stored on a storage device of a computer connected through a network may be transferred to another computer through the network. When the program is executed on a computer, the program is stored on a hard disk or the like in the computer and loaded into the main memory for execution.

[0032]

The above-mentioned electronic mail and the reception confirmation information that have been encrypted may be transmitted. Thereby, it is possible to prevent invalid access of a third party.

[0033]

Furthermore, the charging means 11d may charge differently depending on the storage organization of communication history, storage method, frequency of backup, and data storage size for storing in the communication contents storage means 11c.

[0034]

[Effect of the Invention]

As described hereinbefore, because an electronic mail transmitted from the first communication terminal is stored in the communication contents storage means of the communication contents certification apparatus and also transmitted to the second communication terminal in the present invention, it is possible for the third party organization to store the contents of the communicated electronic mail. Further, it is possible to certify the contents of the communicated electronic mail and to sufficiently secure the certification of the transaction contents carried out by electronic mail.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Fig. 1] Fig. 1 is a block diagram illustrating a communication contents certification system.

[Fig. 2] Fig. 2 shows a transmission message window displayed on a screen of a party communication terminal when a

transmission message is entered.

[Fig. 3] Fig. 3 shows a received message window displayed on the screen of the party communication terminal.

[Description of Reference Numerals and Symbols]

- 10 Communication contents certification system
- 11 Communication contents certification apparatus
- 11a Communication contents receiving means
- 11b Party identification means
- 11c Communication contents storage means
- 11d Charging means
- 11e Communication contents transmission means
- 12 Telecommunication line
- 13a, 13c Party communication terminals
- 13b, 13d Attorney communication terminals

[Document Name] ABSTRACT

[Abstract]

[Object] The contents of a communicated electronic mail are certified, and the certification of transaction contents carried out by the electronic mail is sufficiently secured.

[Constitution] A transmitted electronic mail is transmitted to a destination by way of a communication contents certification apparatus 11, and the transmitted electronic mail is stored in a communication contents storage means 11c when it is transmitted by way of the communication contents certification apparatus 11.

[Selected Drawing] Fig. 1

[Document Name] Drawings

FIG. 1

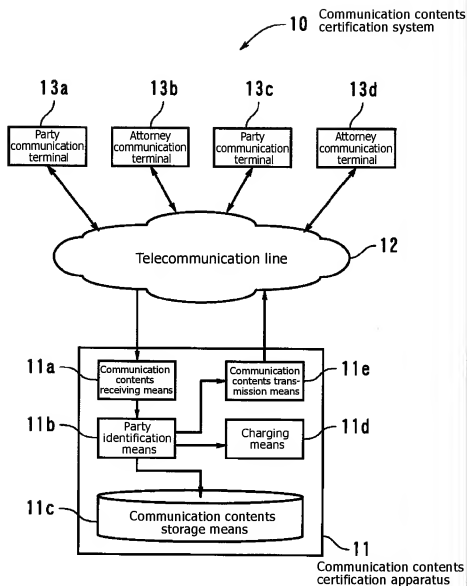


FIG. 2

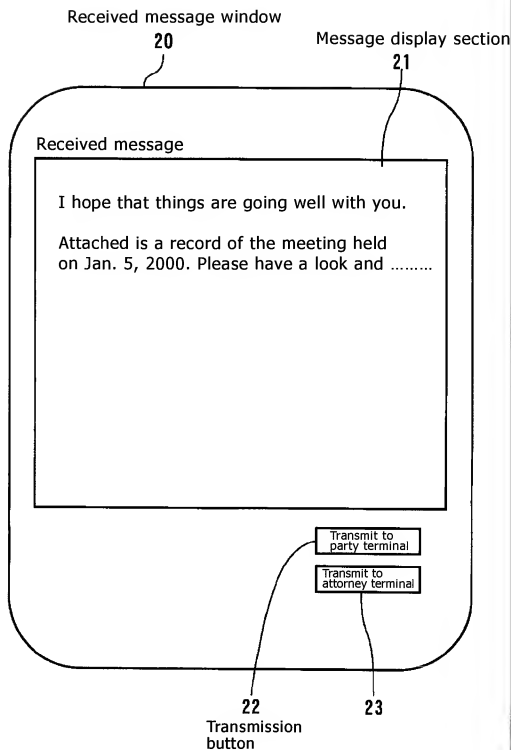


FIG. 3

